

The opening paper of the afternoon was by Mr. Harry C. Oberholser entitled 'The Blue Honey-creepers of Tropical America.' Remarks followed by Frank M. Chapman, E. W. Nelson, and the author.

The next title was 'The Water Ouzel on Mt. Shasta,' by Miss Florence A. Merriam. As the author was not present the paper was read by Mr. Dutcher.

Messrs. Nelson R. Wood and Louis Agassiz Fuytes, two members of the Union, then gave, by special request, imitations of the notes of birds.

The third and concluding paper, 'The Nocturnal Flight of Migrating Birds,' by O. G. Libby, was read in the absence of the author by Dr. T. S. Palmer.

The Union then adjourned to meet in Philadelphia, November 13, 1899.

This Congress was a most successful one, both from the high character of the papers read, and from the large attendance of members and visitors.

JNO. H. SAGE,
Secretary.

REPORT OF THE A. O. U. COMMITTEE ON PRO- TECTION OF NORTH AMERICAN BIRDS.

THE COMMITTEE ON PROTECTION OF NORTH AMERICAN BIRDS is pleased to report a constantly increasing interest in the work in which it is engaged. During the year it has been in correspondence with representatives of thirty-six States and Territories and the mass of data submitted to the chairman is so large that it is possible only to present a small portion of it in this report.

As heretofore the Committee has acted mainly as a bureau of information, placing correspondents in communication with active workers in their respective States, and furnishing literature and advice whenever possible. Beside this general work some special

work has been undertaken by the Committee, especially in relation to State Bird Laws.

Following the suggestions of the last annual report, the Committee prepared a 'Model Bird Law' to serve as a guide for those who should undertake reform in their State laws. This is accompanied by suggestions for modifying the law in cases where its adoption *in toto* was deemed impossible. Copies of this Model Law are furnished to those who are willing to interest themselves in bringing it before their State Legislatures.

Early in the year a meeting of Game Wardens of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, Illinois, Ohio and North Dakota was held in Chicago for the purpose of drafting uniform game laws for these States. Mr. Deane of our Committee appeared before this meeting, in the interest of the uniform bird law, and with the assistance of Mr. L. Whitney Watkins succeeded in securing its adoption for presentation to the respective legislatures, along with the game law.

Effort has also been made to secure recognition of this Committee by the various Audubon and other bird-protective Societies of America, as their representative in international matters. This was deemed desirable in consequence of correspondence with the Oesterreichisch Bund der Vogelfreunde of Grätz, Austria, which has undertaken to establish an International League for the protection of birds, to be represented in each country by some organized body or society. Such organization will doubtless be of much service in securing more uniform bird laws in widely separated countries.

Much important work has been accomplished during the year which has originated outside of your Committee, but which deserves mention in this connection, such as (1) the establishment of the League of American Sportsmen; (2) Mr. Hornaday's report to the New York Zoölogical Society on 'The Destruction of Our Birds and Mammals'; and (3) Senator Hoar's labors in behalf of his bill in Congress to prohibit the importation of wild birds' plumage for purposes of ornamentation.

Senator Hoar's bill strikes at the root of the whole question of bird millinery; for so long as it is permissible to import 'aigrettes' and similar feathers it is almost impossible to prove that dealers

are violating the law and selling American plumes; as they insist that they are all imported. With the importation stopped the traffic would be practically at an end.

Senator Hoar writes that his bill passed the Senate at the last session with but one dissenting voice and now awaits the action of the House. "In the short session, with so many important subjects struggling for attention," he says, "its fate is uncertain; but if you can enlist the vigorous support of one man of influence (in the House) it will be easy, I think, to get it through." Many have already used their influence to secure support for this bill, and your Committee cannot too strongly urge further action on this line. Even should Senator Hoar's bill fail of passage, his agitation in Congress of the question of bird protection and the resultant publicity given to it has done an immense amount of good.

The establishment of the League of American Sportsmen is a matter for congratulation among all lovers of nature, and too much praise cannot be given to Mr. G. O. Shields and his associates for their tireless efforts in exposing 'game hogs' and bird destroyers. Though its work is primarily directed towards the protection of game, the birds also come in for their share of attention, and we look for most satisfactory results from coöperation between this organization and the bird protective societies.

In consideration of the widespread agitation in favor of bird protection and popular bird study during the past year it may prove desirable, before considering the reports from the several States, to take a hasty view of the present status of Bird Protection in the country at large. As regards the killing of birds for the millinery trade, there is apparently little done within the limits of the United States, though in Florida the slaughter of the remaining Egrets seems to go on in spite of laws and all that has been written against the practice. Mr. Geo. W. Kinnison, of Lake City, Fla., writes: "This last season more plumes were shipped than usual, as, owing to the very dry season hunters penetrated the everglades farther to find the rookeries than usual. Our laws are such that a heavy penalty is provided for any one engaged in buying, shipping, or dealing in any way in plumes, but the bulk of the Egret plumes being so small, men will collect them and

with a couple of hand satchels go North and dispose of them. When your northern dealers are punished to the fullest extent of the law for buying them then, and only then, will the killing of plume birds stop in Florida."

The killing of small insectivorous birds for game or 'sport' seems to be largely restricted to the Southern States, but is there practised to such an extent as to warrant the most serious consideration. Miss Florence A. Merriam writes: "The protection we give birds during the nesting season in the North is not wholly satisfactory if they are shot on migrating South, and, as is well known, many of our most valuable insectivorous birds are used for food in the South, and as soon as they begin migrating are subjected to a persistent fusillade. During one week in the spring of 1897, 2600 Robins, shot in North Carolina, were exposed for sale in one market stall in Washington, and in Summerville, S. C., the shooting was so constant that I came to feel that no northern bird could ever reach home alive." Prof. Nehrling and Mr. Allison report the same practice in New Orleans where vast numbers of song birds of all sorts are sold in the markets.

As regards Laws, nearly every State has laws intended to protect the birds, though many are so badly framed as to be absolutely useless. But even good laws are usually dead letters unless there is some one whose business it is to enforce them. In only a few States do the game wardens make it their business to arrest violators of the bird laws, and the greatest need in bird-protective legislation is the provision of salaried game wardens to enforce the laws. It is in this connection, however, that we look for good results by coöperation with the League of American Sportsmen, some of whose wardens are already taking deep interest in the welfare of the song birds.

In the lack of regular wardens much good can be done by posting copies of laws and penalties in prominent places through the country, which experience has shown will deter many would-be slaughterers. It is also well worth while to instruct country constables as to the laws and the profits resulting from the arrest of offenders. One case has come to the notice of the Committee of a country constable who, to use his own words, "netted \$35 in fines from people shootin' birds as Mrs. — calls valuable."

That the widespread agitation for bird protection in the North has caused a much stricter regard for the laws is also shown by the decrease in the number of small birds brought to taxidermists' shops to be mounted. A bird stuffer in one of our large cities, in reply to an inquiry as to his business, said: "It is simply dead. If it warn't for rugs and deer heads we could n't live. Those —, —, — Audubon Societies and bird books and newfangled laws are just crowding us out. I haven't sold a bird in three years. The men are afraid to shoot them or handle them in any shape. What's the birds for if they ain't to be used?"

This is very gratifying, but it seems much more difficult to obtain like results in the South, owing to the fact that small birds have there been regarded as legitimate game for generations, and it will only be by educating the rising generation that satisfactory results will be obtained.

As bearing directly upon this point a quotation from Miss Merriam's report is of interest: "Some valuable hints were given me last winter by the bad boys of a Summerville, S. C., school. It was reported that they robbed every nest in the neighborhood and used sling shots right and left, and I was asked to labor with them. Believing that the only way to prevent killing is to create an interest in the live bird, I preached merely by telling tales of my bird friends, drawing out the boys to tell in turn what they knew. I soon felt that I had fallen not among robbers and sling shooters but among ornithologists. Nevertheless there was work to be done among them; their knowledge was mainly of nests and eggs; they knew little of the general habits of the birds. The sportsman's instinct was strong within them. One lad confessed quite frankly that he had killed a Great Blue Heron 'just to pass the time,' and two boys whom I was cherishing as future Audubons one day announced with cheerful pride that they had just shot 13 Robins. This sporting instinct was, however, offset by a strong love for natural history, and it was easy to stimulate their interest in the habits of the birds by picturing the delights of observing. This plan quickly bore fruit. A Chickadee was building near the house of one of the boys and one day the child came to me full of enthusiasm — he had spent half a day watching it. Graphically he explained the way it had worked and with

eyes aglow he exclaimed, 'I declare it was delightful to watch that little bird build.' I felt the child had given me the answer to the bad boy problem. *Prove to him that the live bird is more interesting than the dead one*, or rather enable him to prove it to himself."

It is on the educational side of the question that the members of the Committee have exerted themselves especially during the past year, and the results are very encouraging. Several new Audubon Societies have been established in 1898 and there are now 14 States societies, with a combined membership of over 16,000, while some 90,000 leaflets, pamphlets, etc., have been distributed through their agency.

Lectures and bird talks have been given in greater numbers than ever before, under the auspices of schools, women's clubs and literary societies; and the observation of bird day in schools, although not authorized by law to the extent that it should be, is being more generally considered as the teachers become aware of its importance. And the most admirable plan of joining its observation with that of Arbor Day is meeting with much favor.

The status of bird millinery remains practically as it has been, no arguments being able to prevail against the fashion leaders of to-day, and the increase and decrease of birds for ornament seems mainly a question of variation in fashion and of the character of material available for use. Though the traffic in American birds is reduced to a minimum, the use of imported species goes on practically unabated.

The milliners in many of our large cities have joined gladly with the Audubon Societies in exhibiting 'birdless hats,' and some, notably Gimbel Bros. of Milwaukee and Philadelphia, have advocated in circulars and advertisements the abandonment of wild birds, while they made a special department of Audubon millinery in their stores; but the present generation of fashionable women, as a class, seems not to be open to argument on this subject. The only possible way to reach them will be by the passage of Senator Hoar's bill. The effect of the widespread appeal for the birds cannot, however, fail to be felt, and it will become more and more apparent as years go by and the younger generation, brought up under its teaching, begins to exert an influence in the community.

One more point remains to be considered in reviewing the present status of bird protection; that is the sacrifice of birds to science. This cannot be conscientiously ignored.

It has been abundantly proven that the birds killed for real scientific use are a factor so small as not to require serious attention in this connection; and it is only necessary to add that the practice of loaning the specimens in large collections to ornithologists engaged in special work obviates to a great extent the necessity of obtaining additional specimens for every new investigation.

The day is past, too, when every ornithologist needs a collection. The collections of our large museums, placed cordially at the convenience of students, answer the needs of many who would otherwise have to possess a cabinet of their own, and many an ornithologist to-day—well deserving of the title—has pursued his studies without a gun.

So much for science: but there is collecting done which science does not sanction; too often permits are granted for scientific collecting to those who collect merely for natural history dealers. The strict enforcement of the law would prohibit this, and it is a matter for serious consideration.

Far worse than the collecting of *birds* for the trade is the 'scourge of egg collecting,' against which Mr. Hornaday has entered such an earnest protest.

Egg-collecting has become a fad which is encouraged and fostered by the dealers until it is one of the most potent causes of the decrease in our birds. The vast majority of egg-collectors contribute nothing to the science of ornithology and the issuing of licenses promiscuously to this class makes any law for bird protection practically useless.

There can be no objection to a student collecting a series of two or three sets of eggs of a species selected to show variation, but when a man numbers in his cabinet "210 sets or 917 eggs of the Kentucky Warbler," and other species in proportion, it becomes an outrage.

Permits should of course be allowed in all States for *scientific* collecting, but the granting power should be in the hands of those who are capable of knowing a true ornithologist or oölogist from an 'egg-hog.'

It is not desirable to prevent a beginner from collecting, as is done in some States where no permits are given to those under 18 years of age. But nothing need be feared from young students if our active ornithologists will take pains to give them a few words of advice.

Too often boys regard the formation of a *large* collection of eggs or birds as necessarily the first step towards becoming an ornithologist of note; but if those who have already won their spurs, will take the trouble to point out to the beginners, the lines of work which yield results of real benefit to science they will be led to see exactly how much collecting and what sort of specimens are really needed for scientific research and not needlessly duplicate what has already been procured. Further, they will in all probability become known as original contributors to ornithological science, while as mere collectors they would bid fair to remain in obscurity.

As bearing directly upon egg collecting by boys, a letter dictated by the late Prof. Spencer F. Baird, shortly before his death and kindly placed at my disposal by his daughter, Miss Lucy H. Baird, is so pertinent that I make the following quotation from it, to show the feelings of one of America's greatest ornithologists upon this subject.

"When I was in the [egg] 'business,' I was collecting material for an exhaustive work on the natural history of the birds of North America, and a set of nests and eggs of each species, in all variations, was a necessity. I consequently needed to have as large a variety as possible, so as to complete the ground. The ordinary bird-egging boy, however, whose enterprise is not to be frowned at, is not such an individual, he simply wants to make a collection of eggs without an ulterior scientific object. A single egg will answer the same purpose in his case as the one hundred required in the one first mentioned. . . . I am inclined to ascribe the reduction in the number of our home birds as much to the taking of eggs for various purposes and driving away the parents as to actual extermination of the birds themselves. However, the most effectual way of preventing the difficulty is by prohibiting the taking of eggs entirely, which I would earnestly recommend."

With this brief outline of the present status of Bird Protection I turn to the reports furnished to the chairman by members of the Committee and others in the various States of the Union.

Only an abstract of these can be given in the present paper but even from this it will be readily seen how extensive and how sincere is the interest in Bird Protection and Bird Study.

The more important reports received by the Chairman from members of the Committee are considered in the following pages, that of Mr. Mackay being given in full, as it is of particular interest in connection with his work of previous years in the protection of the Gulls and Terns of the New England coast.

It is with sincere regret that we are compelled to announce Mr. Mackay's retirement from the Committee, as he feels himself unable to longer continue his valuable work in its behalf.

MASSACHUSETTS.

Mr. Mackay reports as follows: "I herewith submit my report for the year ending Nov. 14, 1898. I was instrumental in having inserted a protective clause in the 'Muskeget Act,' approved June 1, 1895. Acting under this clause the town of Nantucket this year appropriated one hundred dollars for a special police officer, whose duty should be to remain on Muskeget Island from May 1 to August 15, to protect certain birds living in and about that island. Mr. John R. Sandsbury of Nantucket, my candidate, was considerably appointed to the position, and on my application to the Commissioners of Inland Fisheries and Game, was made a Deputy Fish and Game Commissioner, with the authority to arrest without warrant. On entering upon his duties Mr. Sandsbury repaired the old signs, and repapered them with new warning notices, all of which was done by the time the Terns and Laughing Gulls commenced to breed.

"By referring to my report for 1897 (*Auk*, Vol. XV, pp. 84-89), it will be noticed that large numbers of Terns were not in evidence in 1897, and had apparently abandoned the locality. This caused me considerable uneasiness when I viewed with dismay the large falling off in the number of the birds. While on Muskeget, July 2, 3, 4, 5, 1898, I resolved to make such accurate observa-

tions that they could be used hereafter with confidence, for it is doubtful if similar data will be again collected in the near future. It is no slight undertaking to accomplish this conscientiously. The condition of the Terns and Laughing Gulls this year is the best that has ever been reached, to my knowledge, as far as similar observations show.

"Adams Island, which has not had any breeding birds for years, had this season an estimated colony of four hundred Terns. I found here two hundred and ninety-five nests containing five hundred and forty-three eggs. Other localities also show gains over former years. It would appear that many of the Terns not present during 1897 have this season returned to their former haunt, while others, I have reason to believe, have located on Penikese Island. This satisfactory condition does not include the Roseate Terns; their numbers, I regret to state, are still considerably below the splendid aggregate of 1896. I am still in hopes that another season will see most of them back again. When one contemplates the decrease in bird life elsewhere, it must cause extreme satisfaction to all lovers of bird life to know that we have in our midst two such great colonies of Terns as are domiciled on Muskeget and Penikese Islands, the aggregate numbers of which are beyond estimate. A home in such a thickly settled State as Massachusetts, where available sites on the coast are constantly sought for summer residences, is most unusual. The presence of these beautiful birds must naturally enhance the interest in such surroundings.

"When the Massachusetts Legislature met last winter, I had two bills (Nos. 5 and 6) introduced, 'For the better Protection of Certain Birds.' Both bills were similar in character, having the protection of certain Hawks and Owls, etc., as one of the main features, the economic value of which were explained in a letter by Dr. C. Hart Merriam, Chief of the Biological Survey, U. S. Department of Agriculture. I had this letter read before the Senate in connection with my argument. Bill No. 6 omitted certain clauses affecting the marketmen, hotel men, and cold storage interests, who were, and always have been, inimical to my endeavors. I thought if bill No. 5 with such clauses failed, I might succeed with the other. Unfortunately both bills were

heard at the same time by the Fish and Game committee, and although the strongest kind of arguments were presented in their favor, it was without avail, the committee reporting against both bills. I fought them through but was defeated in the end. The combined interests above mentioned have thus far proved too strong for me.

“I would again call attention to the shooting and shipment East *in the spring* of certain birds, and strongly appeal to our Western friends to make some endeavor to prevent it, if possible, in the case of the American Golden Plovers, Eskimo Curlews, and Bartramian Sandpipers. These birds are permitted to be sold in Massachusetts during the closed season provided *they have been taken out of the State*. I have tried very hard to prevent such sale *here*, but without success. These birds are killed in the West and Southwest during the spring while on their way to the breeding grounds. It is a common occurrence to take eggs from the females when cleaning them. Unless protective laws are enacted *in the West*, little can be hoped for in Massachusetts, and it will not be long before these birds will disappear on our coast except as stragglers. In fact, judging from a number of years past in Massachusetts, such conditions have already been reached. Nebraska, Missouri, and Texas (Fort Worth) appear to be the principal shipping points.

“One retrograde law was enacted this year, viz.: The open season on the Scoters having been *extended* from April 15 to May 20, in order to cover for shooting purposes, the spring migration of these Ducks northward to breed. I endeavored to defeat this bill, and at first thought I had succeeded, as it was voted down. A subsequent reconsideration reinstated it, and with another vote it was passed, and later received the approval of the Governor. As a precedent, I consider the success of this bill as unfortunate, as it will invite similar attempts, more than one of which, I hear, are to be undertaken next winter.

“Black-bellied Plovers continue to increase in this State, both in spring and autumn, the result, I am convinced, of protective laws. This increase is creating some discontent with such laws, as persons who desire to kill them in the spring during the closed season, are prevented from so doing.

"The colony of Terns on Penikese Island have enjoyed a season of unmolested quiet. The old signs were repaired, and repapered with new warning notices in Portuguese and English. Arrangements were made early in the spring with Captain Proctor of the Buzzards Bay police boat to continue his surveillance of the island. The Terns arrived in larger numbers this season than for years, which fact is affirmed by fishermen and the inhabitants of Cuttyhunk Island. Mr. Frederick A. Homer wrote me recently that the number of eggs this season is the largest in his experience. He also added: 'In conclusion, I will say I think you would be abundantly satisfied with the Penikese colony of Terns, for in my estimation there has been a decidedly larger number of old birds than for years, as well as a larger number of young, and they seem to have increased in the past few years very materially. At any rate you may rest assured they have been well cared for and protected so far as we were able to do so, and if any good results are obtained we shall be pleased.' You also will be pleased to know, I am sure, that I attribute the present high status of the Terns on Penikese Island to the support I have received from the Messrs. Homer Brothers, owners of the island."

Mr. E. H. Forbush, Ornithologist of the Massachusetts Board of Agriculture and a member of the Committee, sends a most interesting report covering the whole subject of bird protection in his State and we regret that lack of space prevents its presentation in full. Of the work of the Audubon Society he says: "Its work in distributing literature, in interesting teachers, and thereby providing for the inculcation of its principles among the schools, cannot be too highly recognized. This kind of work is bound to bring forth good fruit, 'for what is learned in youth is remembered in old age.'"

As regards Mr. Mackay's report on the Terns he says: "I cannot let this opportunity pass without expressing the highest admiration for the practical work that he has done. It has, I believe, resulted in the increase of the number of Terns all along the Massachusetts coast."

In regard to enforcing the bird laws of the State, Mr. Forbush reports that there are at present 80 fish and game wardens, some

of whom have done excellent work in warning nest robbers and shooters. As most of the wardens are unpaid, however, they can devote but little time to this work. The precincts of the new Metropolitan Park are regularly patrolled by Park Policemen, and the laws against gunners or nest robbers here are very severe, the result being a large increase in the Park of Crows, Quail, Woodcock, Grouse, Jays, Squirrels, and Water Fowl. Most important has been the action of the Board of Agriculture which, at Mr. Forbush's request, appointed twenty bird wardens from the Gypsy Moth force.

Mr. Forbush regards stray cats as one of the greatest sources of harm to our smaller birds, especially to the young in the nests, while boy gunners, pot hunters and Italians are very destructive. Respecting nests he states that he has had several competent observers watching nests within a few miles of his office for three years past with the object of obtaining data on the habits and food of the birds, and each year 75% of the nests are in some way robbed of eggs or young.

Mr. Forbush reports also, as a sample case, the arrest of three Italians, one of whom had on his person nine birds—Robins, Hermit Thrushes and Downy Woodpeckers, and says: "It is pleasant to be able to add that this man was fined \$90, while the others with him were fined for carrying firearms.

"Other Italians were also arrested and fined for trapping birds for dealers in cage birds in Boston, and Judge Pettengill, the trial justice, said: 'I know and love our song birds. Time was when I knew every bird we have hereabouts by its call note. The woods around Boston are full of men and boys with guns who shoot song birds, and I am glad to hear of the interest now taken in the organization of societies for effecting their protection and increase.' Judge Pettengill furnishes a worthy example for imitation by some of our other judges who are sometimes more considerate of the shooters than of the birds."

ILLINOIS.

Mr. Ruthven Deane, in addition to his report on the work of the Illinois Audubon Society, says: "Great credit is due to the

efficient work which has been done in our State by Warden H. W. Loveday and his deputies. Since the first of the year over one hundred prosecutions and convictions have been made for the wanton killing and trapping of song and insectivorous birds, by men and boys, largely Italians and Bohemians. In 1897 there were 580 convictions in the State for illegal killing of game birds, and the result has made violators much less bold, and greatly decreased the breaches of the law. An attempt was made to convict a dealer in native cage birds, but owing to a technicality in the faulty law it failed, though the Judge expressed sincere regret at his inability to punish the offenders. This is another evidence of the necessity of a carefully worded law."

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

Dr. T. S. Palmer of the Committee and of the Biological Survey of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, has furnished much valuable information on bird legislation to various persons contemplating revisions in their State laws. He reports that the Survey has, as in former years, aided the cause of bird protection in every way possible. Its library is always open to students for consultation, and during the spring it kept a special collection of specimens convenient for reference for persons studying the local birds. More than 20,000 copies of the circular on 'Bird Day in the Schools' have been distributed, as well as several editions of the Bulletin on 'Common Birds in relation to Agriculture.' Dr. Palmer conducted a class in bird study among teachers in the Normal School, "the object being to familiarize them with the common birds of the District by actual examination of specimens." The results were highly satisfactory and the plan is an excellent one.

TEXAS.

Mrs. E. Irene Rood of the Committee reports on her work in Texas: "No doubt the most important work done in this State during the year for the protection of birds, has been the organization of numerous Bands of Mercy, all pledged to protect the

birds. Besides this, I have distributed about 20,000 circulars, and have had the law in regard to killing birds printed on large placards and posted in conspicuous places.

"I have not had time to organize any Audubon Societies yet, but have organized a number of Humane Societies which ought to cover the same ground. In fact the State Humane Education Society proposes to do some protective legislative work the coming winter. I have addressed the children in the public schools at nearly all the places I have visited on the subject of bird protection, and advocated a Bird Day, which I hope to see established in a few months."

MISSOURI.

Mr. O. Widmann, of the Committee, reports that little has been done in his State. An exhibition of birdless millinery was given in St. Louis, but seemed to have little effect.

"The laws," he states, "are all right as far as they go but are good for nothing if they are not taken care of by somebody who has the means to enforce them, and as a rule the only means to enforce a law is money to pay men who see that it is enforced. . . . The sale of shot guns and ammunition has been unprecedentedly large in St. Louis, and the war has given a new incentive to the love of slaughter."

ARKANSAS.

Mrs. Louise McGowen Stephenson, of the Committee, sends a most important report which we regret, from lack of space, cannot be given entire.

She has distributed 2000 placards of the bird laws throughout the State, having them posted in schools, railroad stations, express offices, barber shops, saloons and meat markets. Through her efforts and those of Mr. John M. Rose, a new law will be presented to the legislature providing for a State fish and game warden to look after the enforcement of the laws, and with power to appoint assistants. Mrs. Stephenson has also been active in

distributing literature and writing for the daily papers in the interest of bird protection.

She says in closing her report: "This report must not close without mention of some whose aid has been invaluable. To Mr. Neal, editor of 'The World,' great credit is due, for not only are the columns of his paper open to me, but often he has entered the lists himself, and it was at his request that Senator Hoar's 'Plea of the Birds' was scattered broadcast over the whole land, by one of the greatest manufacturers of 'plate matter.'

"Mrs. Sara Thorpe Thomas, of Alexander, Ark., is a faithful friend of the birds and her beautifully written articles are published in various journals throughout the State.

"Last of those I can name here is a dear little girl in Little Rock, Merle McCain, with whom it is my pleasure to correspond, who has with the help of her teacher organized the only Audubon Society in the State."

AUDUBON SOCIETIES.

Owing to the limited space at my disposal it will be impossible in the present report to include extracts from the many letters received from the Audubon Societies, and from individuals who have been working in the interest of bird protection, and we are therefore compelled to summarize their work as briefly as possible.

Audubon Societies at present exist in New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, District of Columbia, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa. Their work has been mainly devoted to the issuing and distribution of literature, and the holding of lectures and meetings at which bird protection and bird study were discussed.

Excellent progress has been made in many States towards the establishment of bird exercises in the schools in connection with Arbor Day celebration, notably in Wisconsin and Indiana, where the State Superintendents of Public Instruction have lent their aid.

Great success has attended the efforts of some of the Societies

in their attempt to interest milliners in the work. Mrs. Robins of Pennsylvania says: "An exhibition of millinery trimmed without the use of wild birds, aigrettes, etc., was held at the Hotel Stratford, Philadelphia, in May, in which all the leading milliners of the city participated, and the attendance of visitors was very large. The exhibits of the various firms were afterwards displayed in their stores and advertised in their newspaper notices, which did still more to draw public attention to the possibilities of 'Audubon millinery.' As a result many of the stores have agreed to make a speciality of birdless hats, and Messrs. Gimbel Bros. have established an Audubon department, besides issuing an appeal for the birds in their millinery advertisements."

SOUTHERN STATES.

In the Southern States, as already stated, there is probably greater need for the agitation of bird protection than anywhere else in the Union. The slaughter of birds there during winter cannot but counteract our best efforts for protection in the North during the nesting season. Mr. Kinnison has already been quoted in relation to the destruction of Egrets in Florida. He adds, in reference to song birds, "Our most welcome bird in the North, the Robin, comes South to winter in droves and is killed here as a game bird. It is not uncommon to see a hunter come to market with them in strings of a dozen each to sell. It makes a man like myself who was raised in northern Indiana sick. Every bird was protected there by my father, and I have watched him when plowing give a wide birth to the little Ground Sparrows' nests. I can never forget these impressions of boyhood, and it hurts me to see the birds slaughtered when they come to Florida simply for a home during the winter."

Mr. T. W. Talley writes from Tallahassee that there is "practically nothing done for the protection of birds; each county has its laws but there is rarely any enforcement of them. I feel confident," he continues, "that much of the destruction of small, beneficial species is due to guns placed in the hands of small boys who learn an accomplishment of every southern gentleman

— to shoot well — by killing every small, beneficial bird that they can see.”

In Louisiana Mr. Andrew Allison reports much the same condition of affairs as in Florida. A new bird and game law has been passed, and he hopes to obtain the passing of still better laws next year.¹

Mrs. E. G. McCabe, of Atlanta, Georgia, has undertaken to introduce the principles of the Audubon Societies during the year, by interesting children in the study of birds and in distributing literature. Rev. H. E. Wheeler of Huntsville, Alabama, has done similar work but deplores the neglect of the birds in his State. Miss Elizabeth J. Cummins has formed a branch of the Pennsylvania Audubon Society at Wheeling, W. Va., and secured 61 members.

In Tennessee, North and South Carolina, correspondence shows that practically nothing has been done for bird protection, though Mr. J. R. Lowry, principal of the North Knoxville School (Tenn.) has undertaken to interest his teachers in the subject, and Miss Merriam has done some work in South Carolina, as already described.

As showing what can be accomplished in the way of legislation the report of Mr. F. C. Kirkwood, of the Maryland Fish and Game Protective Association, is very encouraging. Heretofore Robins, Flickers and Meadowlarks were lawful game birds but in face of strong opposition they have now all been placed in the protected list. Mr. Kirkwood writes: “This was one of the hardest pills to swallow, for the rural population as well as a great many city men; still the law has in the main been observed. As far as song birds are concerned, I consider them as numerous as ever.” Let us hope that similar reforms may be undertaken in the States further south.

PACIFIC COAST.

From the Pacific coast we have only meagre reports. Mr.

¹ I have been informed since this report was written that an Audubon Society was organized during the year in New Orleans, but have no further information of it.

Anthony, of the Committee, writing from Portland, Oregon, early in the year, stated that former sealers were reported fitting out plume hunting expeditions to the Mexican coast. He was later of the opinion that the rush to the Alaskan gold fields, and the consequent demand for vessels, had benefited both birds and seals by attracting the men elsewhere.

Mr. Leverett M. Loomis reports that the sea bird egg trade at San Francisco, Cal., has practically stopped, owing to the steps taken last year.

In Washington, Mr. J. H. Bowles states that bird protection is as yet almost unnecessary, for civilization is not sufficiently advanced to make every boy think it necessary for him to have a collection of eggs or birds. One may see a boy after birds with a sling, but there is a very strict law against these implements and they are very scarce.

In conclusion, your Committee would call attention to the fact that most of the suggestions embodied in last year's report have been acted upon, as shown in the preceding pages, with good results.

Continuance of work on these lines, however, is strongly to be recommended, especially (1) Foundation of Audubon societies. (2) Encouragement of Bird study in schools, women's clubs and other societies, both by lectures and publications in daily and school journals. (3) Establishment of Bird day in connection with Arbor day in the schools. (4) A passage of the model Bird Law in full or in modified form by State legislatures. (5) The assistance of all members of the A. O. U. in furthering these undertakings and in bringing all who are interested in bird study into the Union.

New suggestions which present themselves, or old ones which have not been acted upon are:

(1.) The publication of uniform leaflets for Audubon Societies. At present the weaker societies are unable to publish sufficient literature to meet the demands made upon them, while the larger ones are wasting their funds in printing almost identical matter. A publisher could easily select the best of the various leaflets now in circulation and issue them in large quantity at a very small cost, with the heading left blank for printing in the

name and seal of the individual societies. If one of the larger societies would take the matter up, arrangements could no doubt be made with a publisher and the support of all the other societies secured.

(2.) The need of a cheap monthly magazine devoted to popular ornithology which could serve as an organ for the various Audubon societies and keep the members in touch with their work. All societies which have reached a membership of several thousand realize that it is impossible to communicate with their members more than once or twice a year, owing to the cost of postage, and the success of the societies depends largely upon keeping in communication with their members.¹

(3.) The need of assistance from all true ornithologists in guiding beginners to the proper fields of ornithological research, in discouraging collecting by those who are not contributing to the advancement of the science, and especially in the suppression of the *trade in birds' eggs*.

(4.) The earnest effort of all bird protective associations and members of the Union, in bringing about a better regard for our birds in the South and West.

Respectfully submitted,

WITMER STONE,

Chairman.

¹ Since this was written, I have learned that a bi-monthly magazine of ornithology, to be called 'Bird-Lore' has been established under the editorship of Mr. Frank M. Chapman. This journal will be the official organ of the Audubon Societies, and the first number, which will be issued in February, will contain reports of their work for the year.